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NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION: OFFICE TREATMENT OF NAMES

Principles, Policies & Procedures: Domestic Geographic Names

Paper submitted by the United States of America**

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Principles, Policies & Procedures: Domestic Geographic Names

Roger L. Payne (USA)

The systematic standardization of geographical names requires the formulation of principles, policies, and procedures so that the standardization process can be implemented. The U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN) published statements of policy as early as 1891, one year after its creation. Since that time, these policies have evolved as needed, and now include somewhat different policies for the Board's domestic and foreign names programs. The principles, policies, and procedures relating to the domestic program were first published in 1987 followed in 1989 by a second edition. The third edition was published in August 1997 with numerous revisions, and three major changes. These major changes are the addition of a policy for the treatment of Native American (American Indian) geographic names; an increase from one to five years after a person's death before a commemorative name proposal can be considered; and acceptance of all diacritical and special marks existing in the Roman alphabet for use with geographical names in the United States.